



**STATE OF MISSISSIPPI
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COMMERCE**

CINDY HYDE-SMITH
COMMISSIONER

PRESS RELEASE

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U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Holds Town Hall Discussion in Jackson

Jackson, MS -- Commissioner of Agriculture and Commerce Cindy Hyde-Smith welcomed U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack to Jackson today as he addressed local community and agriculture stakeholders during a town hall discussion at the Mississippi Agriculture and Forestry Museum. Secretary Vilsack stressed the importance of passing a Food, Farm, and Jobs Bill. He gave an update on the current status of the Farm Bill proceeded by various scenarios of potential impacts on both farmers and consumers if a new bill is not passed. The failure to pass a Farm Bill before the October 1 deadline is critical as a number of United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) programs will be impacted as well as relations with trade partners.

During the town hall discussion, Secretary Vilsack also discussed the economic development efforts ongoing throughout the state and USDA's efforts to strengthen the rural economy. He also allowed those present the opportunity to ask questions and to voice any concerns. Prior to his visit to Jackson, Secretary Vilsack toured Mississippi State University. "I am so pleased that Secretary Vilsack chose to visit Mississippi," said Commissioner Hyde-Smith. "His visit was an incredible opportunity for our state as it allowed us to show him the importance of agriculture in Mississippi, and it also gave our farmers and others involved in agriculture the chance to voice their opinions and pose their questions," added Commissioner Hyde-Smith.

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Photo attached.

Photo cutline.

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